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REVIEW.

THE sacred edict, containing sixteen maxims of the Emperor Kang-he, amplified by his son, the Emperor Yung-ching; together with a paraphrase on the whole, by a mandarin. Translated from the Chinese original, and illustrated with notes, By the Rev. WILLIAM MILNE, protestant missionary at Malacca. pp. 299. 8vo. London: 1817. Printed for Black, Kingsbury, Parbury, and Allen.

“CHINA presents the very remarkable spectacle of a vast and ancient empire, with a civilization entirely political, whose principal aim has constantly been to draw closer the bonds which unite the society it formed, and to merge, by its laws, the interest of the individual in that of the public. All other ancient civilizations have, on the contrary, been based upon religious doctrines, which are the best adapted to give stability to human society, by softening the ferocity naturally incident to [fallen] man..... As far as we can trace the organization of society in China, in the remotest antiquity, we find it established on the politico-patriarchal principle. The emperor is considered as the father of his people; his subjects constitute his family. The prime virtue, the prime

- duty, is filial piety; children are to practice it towards their parents, and subjects towards their monarch* and those who represent him. The ancient Chinese never acknowledged a system of religion as a preservative of social morality, and to be denoted by any kind of worship."

This extract, which we have made from the writings of a learned French sinologue, is a very befitting introduction to the remarks we propose to make on the *politico-moral* work, the title of which stands at the head of this article. Among all the modern standard works of the Chinese there is no one which holds a higher rank in their estimation, than the Sacred Edict. Though it is emphatically true that the Chinese rulers and teachers, like their brethren in western Asia, in other times, "say and do not," still it is desirable to know what they do *teach*. A succinct account of the sacred edict will, we think, go far to supply this desideratum.

The *sixteen maxims* were written by Kang-he, the second, and the most learned, beloved, and renowned emperor of the present dynasty, near the close of his reign. This ended A. D. 1723, when he was succeeded by his son, the emperor Yung-ching, who published the *amplification* of his father's maxims, in the second year of his reign. Wang Yew-po, superintendent of the salt revenue, in the province of Shense, was the mandarin who wrote the *paraphrase*; but at what time does not appear, either in the translation, or the copies of the original which are now before us.

- By a national statute it is required, that the sacred edict be proclaimed throughout the empire, by the local officers, on the first and fifteenth of every moon. The manner of doing this is thus described in the translator's preface. "Early on

* The phrase, "father of his people," is not much used by the Chinese; the words *keui*, *te*, *wang*, *hwang-te*, *teen-tszc*,—prince, sovereign, king, emperor, son of heaven,—&c, are frequently employed.

the first and fifteenth of every moon, the civil and military officers, dressed in their uniform, meet in a clean, spacious, public hall. The superintendent, who is called *Le-sang*, calls aloud, "stand forth in files." They do so, according to their rank: he then says, "kneel thrice, and bow the head nine times." They kneel, and bow to the ground, with their faces towards a platform, on which is placed a board, with the Emperor's name. He next calls aloud, "rise and retire;" they rise, and all go to a hall, or kind of chapel, where the law [sacred edict] is usually read, and where the military and people are assembled, standing round in silence. The *Le-sang* then says, "Respectfully commence." The *Sze-keang-sang*, or orator, advancing towards an incense-altar, kneels, reverently takes up the board on which the maxim appointed for the day is written, and ascends a stage with it. An old man receives the board, and puts it down on the stage, fronting the people. Then, commanding silence with a wooden rattle which he carries in his hand, he kneels, and reads it. When he has finished, the *Le-sang* calls out, "Explain such a maxim, or section of the sacred edict." The orator stands up, and gives the sense, —i. e. rehearses the amplification, or paraphrase, or both.

This practice of publishing imperial edicts is of very ancient origin, and has received different modifications and attentions at different periods. The *Shoo-king* says, "annually, in the first month of spring, the proclaimer of imperial decrees went hither and thither on the high ways, with his rattle,* admonishing the people." Subsequently, the laws, or imperial edicts, were publicly read on the first of every month; which practice seems still to be required, but is in fact, we believe, wholly discontinued. At present the public reading of the sacred

* The *rattle* was usually a metallic bell, with a wooden tongue; but sometimes, it is said, the bell itself was made of wood.

edict is kept up in the 'provincial cities,' but is neglected in the country towns, or *Heen* districts. The people rarely attend this *political* preaching of the "mandarins."

The sentiments of the sacred edict are those of the *Joo-keaou*, or the sect of the learned,—the Confucianists. The maxims of Kang-he, in the original, consist of seven characters each; the characters of which the amplifications are composed are numbered, and the amount, usually about six hundred, is set down at the close; the characters of the paraphrase are not numbered; they constitute, however, about two thirds of the book. It is only in their most valuable works, that the Chinese number their characters; in this they resemble the ancient Hebrews, who used to number the words of their sacred writings; but among the Chinese it is a modern device, which, on account of the many various readings and discrepancies in the works of Confucius, Laoutsze, and others, has been adopted in order to preserve, in future, the genuineness of the text.

The style of the book before us, as composed by three different authors, exhibits considerable variety; the maxims are drawn out in measured prose; the amplifications are, the Chinese themselves being judges, written in a high classical style; but the paraphrase is colloquial and diffuse, abounding with the provincialisms of the northern capital. The translation, from which we shall give some extracts as we proceed, is faithful to the original, perspicuous, and sometimes verbose. But our object in taking up this work, is not so much with a view to notice the method and style of the original or the translation, as to show the *sentiments, opinions, and habits*, which the Sacred Edict inculcates. To this task we proceed, and with as much brevity as the nature of the work will admit. We take the sixteen maxims in their order, copying them from the translation.

- 1.—*Pay just regard to filial and fraternal duties, in order to give due importance to the relations of life.*

On these two duties the Chinese raise the whole system of their morals, and their civil polity. From parental virtue—which “is truly great and exhaustless as that of heaven”—Yung-ching urges the exercise of filial piety; which, he says, is founded “on the unalterable laws of heaven, the corresponding operations of earth, and the common obligations of all people.” The “precise design” of his sacred father, in publishing the sacred edict, was by filial piety, to govern the empire; hence he commenced with filial and fraternal duties. The son must employ his whole heart, and exert his whole strength in behalf of his parents. Gambling, drunkenness, and quarreling are the destroyers of filial piety; and, in a word, every species of misconduct is unfilial. Were all dutiful to their parents, and respectful to their elder brothers, throughout the whole empire, or *world*, there would be rest; and as a final argument, their ancient proverb is quoted, “Persons who discharge filial piety and obedience, will have children dutiful and obedient; the obstinate and undutiful, will bring up children undutiful and obstinate.” Such are the retributions, and the *only* retributions, which are unfolded in the moral, and political systems of the disciples of Confucius; to them, in their sacred books, life and immortality are not brought to light; and like the Romans “their foolish heart is darkened.”

- 2.—*Respect kindred in order to display the excellence of harmony.*

Throughout the Chinese Empire there are only about one hundred family names; hence the family relations are exceedingly numerous. To count up the number of their remote ancestors, to trace

their genealogies, and to keep their family calendars correct, the Chinese, often, take the greatest possible care. But it is, usually, easy to compute the number of their "kindred," (of which they reckon nine gradations,) because they not unfrequently inhabit the same house. A case of this kind is cited by Yung-ching; and another referred to, where seventy persons all ate together; and in this latter case the harmony was such, that even "the very dogs," of which "about an hundred" belonging to the family, were *renovated*! The nine gradations of kindred are thus denominated by Wang, in his paraphrase; "I myself am one class; my father is one; my grandfather one; my great grandfather one; and my great great grandfather one. Thus above me are four classes. My son is one class; my grand-son one; and my great grand-son one; and my great great grand-son one. Thus there are four classes below me. These in all, myself included, make nine classes of kindred."

Yung-ching gives the following as the probable reasons why kindred are not respected, and harmony illustrated, *viz.* "either that the rich are niggardly, and void of the virtue of liberality; or that the poor are greedy, and have insatiable expectations; either that the honorable trample on the mean, and, relying on their own influence, annihilate regard to the heaven-appointed relations; or that the mean insult the honorable, and cast their angry pride at their own bones and flesh; either that having had a strife about property, the mourning badges are neglected; or that having met with occasional opposition, the virtues of kindred are instantly lost; either from privately listening to the ignorant talk of wives and children, or from erroneously regarding the false and reproachful speeches of tale-bearers;—hence arise altercations, injuries, and every evil." The admonitions and counsels of the emperor are in a similar strain, and are also equally just.

3.—*Let concord abound among those who dwell in the same neighbourhood, in order to prevent litigations.*

The remarks on this maxim are very similar to those which occur under the preceding one; with this difference, that, they are applied to a neighbourhood instead of a family. The causes and effects of *discord*, and the means of preserving *harmony*, are pointed out, and all are warned and exhorted to avoid the one, and to pursue the other. “But this exhortation,” says Wang, “though addressed to the soldiers and people, especially requires you, noble families, country gentlemen, aged persons, bachelors of arts in the seminaries, and persons of superior capacity in the neighbourhood, first to set the example of harmony, in order to excite the simple people to imitation.” In winding up his exhortation, the superintendent of the salt revenue becomes rather pungent and severe in his remarks on a class of men, whom he regards as the great promoters of litigations. He says:—

“Not attending to their proper duty they wish to become petti-fogging lawyers; and with that view, connecting themselves with persons in the public offices, they learn to compose a few sentences of an accusation, the one half intelligible and the other not. They speak many things, contrary to their own conviction, in order to blind the minds of others. These persons set themselves up in the villages, and move persons to lawsuits; and then, acting as busy-bodies between the parties [with the specious pretence of being mediators], swindle money and drink from both. Moving and at rest they have only one topic, “Maintain your dignity;” they also say, “Rather lose money than sink your character.” The stupid people, besotted by them, are led into deep waters; and notwithstanding, are unconscious of having acted wrong in listening to them. Probably these low-rate lawyers, either form vile schemes to set men at variance, or, walking in devious ways, assume threatening airs to frighten and deceive them; either put on the mask of friendship, yet lead men into snares; or knavishly borrow the language of justice, yet secretly effect their own private ends. According to the royal law, this description of persons ought to die—the justice of superior powers assuredly

will not excuse them—when the measure of their crimes is filled up, their misery will be complete;—they will suffer the due punishment of their wickedness. Reflect for a moment. What one of all these bare-stick lawyers, of whatever country, ever came to a natural, or prosperous end?”

4.—*Give the chief place to husbandry and the culture of the mulberry-tree, in order to procure adequate supplies of food and raiment.*

In nothing are the Chinese more worthy of commendation, than in their attention to agriculture and the manufacture of cloth; in these particulars they have been equalled but by few, and excelled, perhaps, by none. Their *modus operandi* is simple, often rude; and in every respect peculiar to themselves. They are strangers to the modern improvements, and rely on diligence alone for success. “Of old time the emperors themselves ploughed, and their empresses cultivated the mulberry-tree. Though supremely honorable, they disdained not to labour, in order that, by their example, they might excite the millions of the people to lay due stress on the radical principles of *political economy*.” So says Yung-ching, and adds, “Suffer not a barren spot to remain a wilderness, or a lazy person to abide in the cities. Then the farmer will not lay aside his plough and hoe; or the house-wife put away her silk-worms and her weaving. Even the productions of the hills and marshes, of the orchards and vegetable gardens, and the propagation of the breed of poultry, dogs, and swine, will all be regularly cherished, and used in their season to supply the deficiencies of agriculture.”

There are very few substances, animal or vegetable, products of land or sea, which do not come into the list of edibles among the Chinese. In times of scarcity, in particular, which frequently occur, it would be difficult to say what they will not eat. A complete account of this subject would make a novel chapter in the history of the Chinese.

5.—*Hold economy in estimation, in order to prevent the lavish waste of money.*

Next to diligence, *economy* is to be practiced, and most rigidly in every expenditure, except in that required for the management of funeral obsequies, — “the greatest work of human life.” In the book before us, while the people are required to go to the very utmost of their ability in preparing a coffin, and grave clothes, in order that the mortal remains of their parents may enjoy repose, they are dissuaded from inviting the priests of Taou and Budha to recite the sacred books, and to pray for the dead.

If a “desire of getting” could preserve from prodigality, no people would be more secure, in this respect, than the Chinese; but such is not the fact. *To-day we have wine, to-day let us get drunk; to-morrow’s grief let to-morrow support*, “are two very bad sentiments, which are constantly in the mouths of men of the present age,” and the ways of wasting a patrimony “are very many.”

6.—*Magnify academical learning, in order to direct the scholar’s progress.*

The Chinese have four degrees of literary rank; *Sew-tsae*, “talent flowering;” *Keu-jin*, “a promoted man;” *Tsin-sze*, “introduced scholar;” and *Han-lin*, “ascended to the top of the trees.” By the first, the individual rises one step above “the simple people,” and becomes a candidate for the second degree; which, when obtained, makes him eligible to office. By the third, he is qualified for an introduction to the imperial presence; and by the fourth, raised to the summit of literary honor. The Chinese have always paid great attention to learning. “Of old, families had their schools; villages, their academies; districts, their colleges; and the nation, her university; of consequence

no one was left uninstructed." Not exactly so now; for though the schools, both public and private are numerous, yet they are poorly conducted; besides, probably not less than two tenths of the male, and nine tenths of the female population, are utterly destitute of instruction.

7.—*Degrade strange religions, in order to exalt the orthodox doctrine.*

Almost all kinds of false religions, that ever flourished in the world, seem to have found their way to China, where, with various modifications, they now exist. But they exist without any life-giving principles; systems they are, without foundation, without order; framed in darkness, and upheld by ignorance and superstitions. They do not, and from their very nature they cannot, afford support equal to the exigences of man; and hence proving unsatisfactory, it is not at all surprising, that they should be neglected, and even deprecated by those who see and know their destructive effects. If we mistake not, all false religions in China are on the decline: and sure we are, that, by many of the learned, and of those in authority, they are but little regarded, and but poorly supported.

"From of old *three sects* have been delivered down. Besides the sect of the learned, there are those of *Taou* and *Fuh*."* Very little is said, in the sacred edict, of the sect of the learned; but of the other two "orthodox sects," as well as of some of the "strange religions," we find pretty full descriptions; some of these we quote.

(+) "As to the sect of *Taou*, what they chiefly insist on,—the law of renovation, by which they talk of solidifying the quicksilver; converting the lead; calling for grumbling dragons, and roaring tigers; forming internal and external pills; and I know not what else,—have all no farther object than that of nour-

* *Fuh* is an abbreviation of *Fuh-too*, the Chinese pronunciation of the characters which they use to denote *Budha*.

ishing well the animal spirits; and of lengthening out life for a few years: that is all. Mr. Choo says, "What the sect of Taou chiefly attends to is, the preservation of the breath of life." This single sentence expresses the summary of the religion of Taou. It is true that the superior men among the priests of Fuh, who reside in the pearl monasteries of the famed hills, and well understand to deliver doctrines, reduce the whole to one word, viz. the *heart*. And those good doctors of Taou, who, in the deep recesses and caves of the mountains, seek to become immortal, conclude the whole with this one thing, namely, *renovation of spirit*. Yet, when we attentively examine the matter, to steal away thus to those solitary abodes, where there are neither men, nor the smoke of human habitations; and to sit cross-legged in profound silence, is completely to root up and destroy the obligations of relative life. Now, we shall not say that they cannot either become equal to Fuh, or attain the rank of the immortals; but if they really can, who has ever seen the one class ascend the western heavens; or the other take their flight upwards in broad day? Ah! it is all a mere farce! A mere beating the devil! But, notwithstanding, you people are easily imposed on, and induced to believe them. Do but observe these austere priests of Fuh, and renovating doctors of Taou, who, for advantage, destroy the relations of human life;—they are not worth the down of a feather to society.

"All these nonsensical tales about keeping fasts, collecting assemblies, building temples, and fashioning images, are feigned by those sauntering *Ho-shang* and *Taou-sze*, (priests of Budha and Taou,) to deceive you. Still you believe them, and not only go yourselves to worship and burn incense in the temples; but also suffer your wives and daughters to go. With their hair oiled, their faces painted, dressed in scarlet, trimmed with green, they go to burn incense in the temples; associating with those priests of Fuh, doctors of Taou, and bare-stick attorneys, touching shoulders, rubbing arms, and pressed in the moving crowd. I see not where the good, they talk of doing, is: on the contrary, they do many shameful things that create vexation, and give people occasion for laughter and ridicule.

All this, and much more of the same kind, the "salt mandarin" is pleased to say concerning the the sects of Taou and Budha. Nay, he attacks the moral character of "grandfather" Fuh; accuses him of being *avaricious*, and *unfilial*; and, in short, declares the "god" to be a *scoundrel*. His followers are unfilial and wicked in the extreme; but those of the Taou sect are still worse; "they talk

about employing spirits, sending forth the general of the celestial armies, beheading monsters, chasing away devils, calling for the rain, worshipping the great bear, and—I know not what else.” In this way business is neglected, all talk of wonders, and the hearts and morals of the people are destroyed. Other sects, “of most abominable men,” are noticed with equal severity; and finally, the religion of the Romish Missionaries comes under review. Upon this, Wang remarks:

“Even the sect of *Teen-choo*,* who talk about heaven, and chat [prate] about earth, and of things without shadow, and without substance,—this religion also is unsound and corrupt. But because [the European teachers of this sect] understand astronomy, and are skilled in the mathematics, therefore the government employs them to correct the calendar. That however by no means implies that their religion is a good one. You should not on any account believe them. The law is very rigorous against all these left-hand-road, and side-door sects! Their punishment is determined the same as that of the masters and mistresses of your dancing gods [i. e. male and female conjurers]. Government enacted this law to prohibit the people from evil, and to encourage them to do good, to depart from corruption, and revert to truth, to retire from danger, and advance to repose.”

We will make but one more extract from this part of the sacred edict, and then leave our readers to make their own reflections, and draw their own conclusions.

“Having already two living divinities† placed in the family, why should men go and worship on the hills, or pray to those molten and carved images for happiness? The proverb says well, “In the family venerate father and mother; what necessity is there to travel far to burn incense? Could you discriminate truth from falsehood, you would then know, that a

* *Teen-choo*, “Heaven, Lord.” This term, it is well known, is not Chinese; it was, after much controversy, adopted by the Romish missionaries. *Christianity*, according to Romanism, is known universally in China, by the phrase *Teen-choo-keaou*, or “the religion of Heaven’s Lord.” It is after all but a *wide* expression for the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ.

† These living divinities, placed in the family, are father and mother.

clear and intelligent mind is the temple of heaven, and that a dark and ignorant mind is the prison of hell. You would act with decision, and not suffer yourselves to be seduced by false religions. Your own characters once rectified, all that is corrupt would retire of its own accord. Harmony and order reigning to a high degree in the family, on the appearance of calamity, it may be converted into felicity. To maintain faithfulness to the prince and filial duty to parents to their utmost, completes the *whole* duty of man. Then you will receive celestial favour."

3.—*Explain the laws, in order to warn the ignorant and obstinate.*

Both in the amplification and paraphrase of this maxim, the remarks are confined to the penal code. The principal things "insisted on" in this code are beating, banishment, beheading, strangling, and cutting into small pieces. It would require a volume to detail all the crimes for which these punishments, with various modifications, are inflicted. Some of them,—such as theft, robbery, arson, forgery, drunkenness, fornication, seduction, kidnapping, murder, sedition, rebellion, heterodoxy, accusing falsely, imitating demons,—are enumerated; and the people assured, that even the very slightest transgressions, though they should proceed from ignorance, cannot pass with impunity. Hence they are called upon to listen to the admonitions of the law, that they may avoid its heavy penalties.

9.—*Illustrate the principles of a polite and yielding carriage, in order to improve manners*

The Chinese have long been celebrated for *their* politeness. Many of their rules of conduct are indeed excellent, and would not suffer at all in comparison with those of the Chesterfieldian code. True politeness, in their view, does not consist in mere external embellishments, but in propriety of behaviour, and a yielding spirit,

By *propriety* they seem to understand a certain "fitness," by which all things, material and immaterial, are kept in their proper order, and honored according to their intrinsic value. "It is the immovable statute of the heavens and the earth, the preface and the conclusion of the myriads of things; its nature is supremely great; its utility most extensive." When men act with propriety, then the yielding spirit will predominate; the mere externals of bowing and scraping, will give place to sincerity of heart; modesty and humility will take the place of envy and strife; mildness and gentleness, the place of ferocity and stubbornness; "the olive branch of peace flourish; and prosperity rise to perfection." But—alas! "though every one knows to talk of politeness and yielding, *few practice them.*" This is according to their own showing; and whether the witness be true or false, we leave it with our readers to judge.

10.—*Attend to the essential employments, in order to give unvarying determination to the will of the people.*

In the sacred edict, the Chinese are spoken of as constituting five classes, *viz.* the learned, husbandmen, mechanics, merchants, and soldiers. The appropriate duties of each of these several classes are regarded as the *essential employments*. Each class must constantly and diligently attend to the proper duties of their own sphere, that they may be profitable to themselves, and useful to the world. Even *women* have their proper work. They must dress flax, spin, weave, embroider, make shoes, stockings, &c. But there are some very bad people, "who love to enjoy themselves," to eat good things, to wear fine clothes, to sit at ease, and go about idling; and, at length, they transgress the royal law, and commit unpardonable offences. "How lamentable is this!"

11.—*Instruct the youth, in order to prevent them from doing evil.*

This maxim, according to Yung-ching, refers chiefly to domestic instruction, and the formation of early habits. His "sacred father" regarded all in the empire as his own children, and widely diffused the means of *family instruction*. And "we," he continues, "having received the mighty trust, and realizing our sacred father's compassionate regard to all, are no day without thinking of you, our people; and no day without thinking of your youth."

At the age of ten, the blood and spirits of youth are unsettled, and their understanding begins, gradually, to unfold itself. For educating and restraining them, there is no period equal to this. Fathers and elder brothers must now watch over them, guard their incautious steps, unfold their "*virtuous nature*," restrain their corrupt propensities, and enlarge their capacity for knowledge. They must also go before them, personally, as their ex-emplars; and must daily, cause them to see and hear something good, till their virtuous habits become confirmed. Then fathers and elder brothers will all have glory; their gates will be illuminated; and felicity and honor descend to their posterity.

12.—*Suppress all false accusing, in order to secure protection to the innocent.*

The necessity for this maxim is very great. If we credit our imperial writer in his amplification, the "*masters of litigations*" are not few, nor their crimes of any ordinary turpitude. The lust of gain having corrupted their hearts, and their nature being moulded by deceit, they scatter their poison, confound right and wrong, use the pencil as their sword, and look on lawsuits and jails as mere children's play. "The innocent who are falsely

accused, are indeed, greatly to be pitied; but those *wretches* who falsely accuse them, are still more to be detested."

13.—*Warn those who hide deserters, that they may not be involved in their downfall.*

Soon after the present Tartar race ascended the throne of China, a law was passed forbidding their soldiers going from one province to another without a permit, and declaring those who do so "deserters." The law requires that these deserters, and the principal persons in the families where they are concealed, shall be banished beyond the limits of the provinces to which they belong; and that the superiors of the ten neighbouring families shall be beaten and banished to some other district in the same province, for three years.

14.—*Complete the payment of taxes, in order to prevent frequent urging.*

The revenue of the Chinese, arises chiefly from taxes on land and merchandize; and not "a thread or a hair too much" is ever demanded. The taxes are very important; with them the mandarins are rewarded for ruling, the soldiers for protecting, and the emperor furnished with the means for feeding "our people;" and an hundred other things are accomplished—all in behalf of the people. Still there is often great delay in the payment of taxes. "Now if by delay, the payment could be prevented, it would be all well;" but this cannot be the case; presents, and flatteries, and bribes, and excuses will "at last" be vain; collectors like hungry hawks, will devise numerous methods to supply their own wants; and the nameless ways of spending, will probably amount to more than the sum which ought to have been paid; *ergo* taxes must be paid. Then, "you will enjoy rest and true comfort; the mandarins will not distress you; the clerks will not vex you;—How joyful will you then be!"

15.—*Unite the paou and kea, in order to extirpate robbery and theft.*

No method of suppressing these evils is equal to "the law of the *paou* and the *kea*." Ten families form a *kea*, and ten *keas* constitute a *paou*. Every *kea* has its elder, and every *paou* its chief. A register is prepared, and the names of all are enrolled. On the highways sheds are erected, where the military, who keep watch, may lodge; at the ends of every street and lane there are gates, where bells are placed, and lamps, furnished with oil; and after nine o'clock at night, walking must not be allowed.—Henceforth let all these things be rigorously put in execution.

But notwithstanding all this, and the fact that the work of *extirpation* has long been in full operation, still thefts and robberies multiply day after day, so that the country cannot obtain rest. The reasons for this "are about three," *viz.* the unfaithfulness of local officers; the influence of shameless country squires; and the fact that the people are not careful to observe the rules of the *kea* and *paou*.

16.—*Settle animosities, that lives may be duly valued.*

"We think that among the principles of human conduct, there is none greater than that of preserving the body. The people have bodies, by which to attend to the radical things, to cultivate the land, nourish their parents, and support their families. The military have bodies, by which to practice the military art, and afford protection, in order to remunerate the government. The body was made for use; therefore men should love themselves. But the passions of living men are deviating, and they cannot change them. They indulge their tempers till they burst forth, and cannot be stopped. Provoked to anger for a single day, unconquerable enmities are produced; mutual revenge is sought; both parties are wounded and injured. It arose from very small beginnings, but great injury results.

"Our sacred father, the benevolent Emperor, in consequence of desiring to manifest compassionate regard to you,

closed the sixteen maxims of the admonitory Edict by teaching to respect life. The heart of heaven and earth delights in animated nature; but fools regard not themselves. The government of a good prince loves to nourish, but multitudes of the ignorant lightly value life. If the misery arise not from former animosities, it proceeds from momentary anger. The violent, depending on the strength of their backbone, kill others, and throw away their own lives. The pusillanimous, wishing to bring the guilt of their blood on others, throw themselves into the water, or hang themselves. (Anger rises to enmity, and enmity increases anger. The original causes of this, are indeed not confined to a few. But that in which the military and people more easily offend, arises, in many instances, from indulging in the use of *spirituous liquors*; for spirits are a thing which can disorder the mind and will of man, and occasion a loss of his equanimity. Probably, while guest and host are taking a glass together, they proceed from mirth to drunkenness. Then an improper word leads to laying hold of daggers, and encountering each other; or probably, a cross look creates an offence, which could have been as easily settled, at first, as the melting of ice; but which, after the passions are heated by wine, breaks forth, and is as hard to endure as the deep enmities which should be revenged. It is generally seen that in five or six cases out of ten, involving life, which come before the Criminal Board, the evil has arisen from spirituous liquors. Alas, for them! the body is placed in chains; their property lost; their persons thrown away; and not only so, but their families are involved; and misery spreads through the neighbourhood. After this to beat on the breast, bitterly wailing and repenting, what will that avail?)

“With respect to the injury of ardent spirits, let it be more vigilantly watched against. The ancients [at seasons of festivity] appointed a person to watch and keep an account [of the number of cups they drank]. They feared, that noisy mirth and songs might end in strife, and in throwing about the crockery. Should we then drown reflection in the puddle of intoxication, and throw our persons in the way of punishment?

“Soldiers and people, respectfully obey this: disregard it not. Then the people in their cottages, will be protected; the soldiers in the camp, enjoy repose; below, you will support your family character; and above, reward the nation. Comfortable and easy in days of abundance, all will advance to a virtuous old age. Does not this illustrate the advantages of settling animosities?”

With these words of the imperial successor of Kanghe, we close our extracts from the Sacred

Edict. Again and again we have read the work, both in the original, and in the translation. By each repetition our minds have been more and more thoroughly convinced of the complete *atheism* of the joo-keaou. Many of their writings, like the sacred edict, abound with excellent precepts and remarks, and afford satisfactory proof of the fact that, "that which may be known of God is manifest in them," "so that they are without excuse." But although the eternal power and Godhead are "clearly seen," and "these [disciples of the sage], having not the law, are a law unto themselves," yet what is the result of all this light upon these polite and amiable sons of Han? It is precisely the same, we think, that it was on the minds of the learned and polished Romans; who "professing themselves to be wise, became fools, and changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator."

It was "for this cause" that *they* were given up to vile affections: "being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful." All this was true of the Romans, and so it is of the inhabitants of this empire. The Chinese "are without God;" and in their belief, "that undiscovered country, from whose bourn no traveller returns," does not exist. Even Confucius seems to have had no just idea of the being and attributes of the High and Lofty One; or any adequate conception of the immortality of the soul, and of man's future state in a world to come. Heaven and Earth, were the greatest existences he acknowledged; and even these might be worshipped only by sovereigns; for the people could not, without "presumptuous assumption," attempt the worship of these powers.

A BRIEF SKETCH OF THE LIFE AND LABORS OF THE LATE

REV. WILLIAM MILNE, D. D.

Few subjects of contemplation are more delightful than the rise, development, and mature operation of a vigorous and commanding mind. If the course of that mind is upward, from a lower to a higher sphere of influence, our interest increases while we witness its gradual progress, against the impediments of early habits, through enclosing difficulties, and over new obstacles. And if this exaltation of rank, rests, not as too many, upon a basis of wrongs, and miseries, and blood, but upon the blessings diffused around that course, the highest degree of approbation and of pleasure attend such a review. Indeed, in our opinion, the noblest object of contemplation in all this world, is the man whose settled and sole business for life, is *doing good*. Men love, approve, or respect that man; angels "minister unto him," the eyes of God are over him, and the Highest calls him his "son."

Such a man requires more firmness of purpose, and vigor of character than the common world ever furnishes. For with all the weakness of human nature, he is to resist the control of vicious passions and propensities, which are common to him with all others. And this contest is to cease only with life. Then, he must totally renounce the common and selfish principle of living for himself, or of having any personal interests at all, except as he makes the cause of his master his own. Here, almost all fail; and not a few whom we would hope are real christians, make it doubtful, by their conduct, whether they have passed this initiatory step of a benevolent life. Yet thus far is but preparative; the actual duties of the life he has chosen, remain to be performed, amidst all the internal and human temptations to abandon or slight them, together with the discouragement, perhaps, of small success, and the indifference, or ridicule, or opposition of those whom he would benefit, and of others:—thus continuing to serve an invisible master whom his eyes have never beheld, till his strength is spent, and he sinks into the grave. Does the service of the world require any such energy of mind, and self-control as this? No; fixedness of purpose and independence, there, is but the steadfast pursuit of one selfish purpose, to the disregard of other objects less esteemed.

Dr. Milne, whose life has suggested these prefatory remarks, appears to have been one of the few, in whom were combined, the energy of mind requisite to command influence, and the disposition of heart to apply that influence to the noblest purposes. To feelings naturally ardent, he added such diligence in pursuit, perseverance in purpose, and fruitfulness in resources, as results from an extraordinary devotion to the great missionary work. In many of the first qualifications, he ranks high among modern missionaries.

William Milne was born in Aberdeenshire in Scotland, in 1785. His father died when he was six years of age, and his mother gave him the education common to boys in his condition in life. In his early orphanage, it appears, he was put under the care of a relative, who neglected his morals till he became notoriously wicked. His own account of himself at this time, is the following. "The natural depravity of my heart, began to show itself by leading me into the commission of such sins as my age and circumstances admitted. In profane swearing, and other sins of a like nature, I far exceeded most of my equals, and became vile even to a proverb. I can remember the time (O God! I desire to do it with shame and sorrow of heart), when I thought that to invent new oaths would reflect honor on my character, and make me like the great ones of the earth."

Though he had been the subject of occasional serious impressions, yet it was not till sixteen years of age, that he knew the value and love of the Saviour, as the Saviour of sinners. At sixteen, when he had fondly hoped to drink in his fill of iniquity, the Lord, who had better things in reserve for him, removed him to another place, where he enjoyed the privilege of pious friends, and social prayer. From this time his pursuit of pleasure was marred, and the attainment of religion seemed the only substantial good to an immortal creature. But here he found those little trials, the endurance of which, no doubt, contributed to that decision which was afterwards characteristic of him. We give his words:

"As the family where I lived were strangers to religion themselves, and derided them who made it their concern, I was very disagreeably situated. My only place for quiet and unnoticed retirement, was a sheep cote, where the sheep are kept in winter. Here surrounded by my fleecy companions, I often bowed the knee on a piece of turf, carried in by me for the purpose. Many hours have I spent there in the winter evenings, with a pleasure to which I was before a stranger; and while some of the family were plotting to put me to shame, I was eating in secret, the "bread which the world knoweth not of."

His "delightful employment" of watching the flock, gave him much opportunity for reading, to which he was always attached. A book of martyrs, entitled "*the cloud of witnesses*"

contributed also to the formation of some traits of his character. "*Boston's four-fold state*," led him into a better acquaintance with himself, and after much distress of mind, he obtained such views of the *free grace* of the gospel that his whole heart was captivated. "~~Having~~ said he, an earnest desire to devote myself to God, I was encouraged to do so in the way of a personal covenant. Retiring to a place surrounded by hills, I professed to choose the Lord as my God, Father, Saviour, and everlasting portion, and offered up myself to his service, to be ruled, sanctified, and saved by him. This was followed with much peace of mind and happiness, with earnest desires to be holy, with a determination to cast in his lot among the despised followers of the Lamb, and with concern for the salvation of others. Two years after, he renewed this covenant, wrote it down, and "subscribed with his hand unto the Lord;" and the next year, he was received as a member of the congregational church at Huntly. "What a wonder am I to myself! Surely the Lord has magnified his grace to me above any of the fallen race."—Such were his recorded feelings at this time.

From this period till his embarkation for China, he was not idle in his new master's service. Long before he ever thought of that profession in life which he subsequently entered, he "felt so much interested in the coming of Christ's kingdom among the nations, that he used to spend hours in prayer for this desirable object," regarding it as a common christian duty. It was not till about twenty years of age that his views were directed to the personal consecration of himself to the missionary work; and then many obstacles opposed his desire. However, after spending five years in making provision for the comfortable support of his widowed mother, and sisters, he saw this object accomplished. "Should I leave my mother and sisters in want, said he, the missionary cause will suffer reproach."

Respecting his first application to the committee at Aberdeen, who were to decide whether he should be accepted, and should prepare for the work, there is an authentic anecdote told, too characteristic of his spirit to be suppressed. When he first came before them, his appearance was so rustic and unpromising, that a leading member of the committee said, he could not recommend him as a missionary, but would not object to recommend him as a *servant* to some mission, provided he were willing to go in that capacity. When this proposal was made to Milne, and he questioned upon it, he immediately replied with most animated countenance, "Yes, Sir, most certainly; I am willing to be any thing so that I am in the work."

The committee accepted him, and directed him to Gosport, in England, where he went through a regular and successful course of studies, under the Rev. David Bogue. "I began,

said he, with scarcely any hope of success; but resolved that failure should not be for want of *application*." How well he kept this resolution, may be seen in his subsequent labors, as well as by the following extract from his private journal, eight or ten years afterwards. "Nov. 26th, 1820, the University of Glasgow conferred on me, without fee or solicitation, the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity; this distinction is, in one respect, like my daily mercies, unmerited. May I be the humbler and more useful for it, and never act unworthy of the honor."

In July, 1812, at the close of his studies, he was ordained to the ministry, and dedicated to the service of Christ among the heathen. He was soon after married to Miss Cowie, daughter of Charles Cowie Esq. of Aberdeen. Mrs. Rachel Milne is described by a friend still surviving, as "eminently pious, prudent, and meek-tempered. They were much attached to each other, and lived most happily together, till her death in 1819." About a month after Dr. Milne's ordination, they embarked at Portsmouth; and having touched at the Cape of Good Hope, and the Isle of France, they arrived at Macao, and were most cordially welcomed by Dr. and Mrs. Morrison, July 4th, 1813.

After a few day's residence here, he was ordered by the governor, to leave Macao in 24 hours. He accordingly proceeded to Canton, leaving his family under the roof of his friend Dr. Morrison. Following the suggestion of his fellow-labourer, he laid aside, while in Canton, almost every other pursuit but the language. Dr. Milne entered on his work under more favorable circumstances, than his predecessor had done. Still it appears the task was not easy. "I had an idea, said he, that the language was very difficult; an idea which I have never yet seen any reason to change. I felt convinced, that a person of very humble talents, would need great diligence, undivided attention, and unyielding perseverance, to gain a knowledge of it, sufficient to make him serviceable at all to the cause of Christianity." Accordingly, to this, he devoted his strength, his time, and his heart. From morning to night he plodded over the characters, gaining little help, and that from a native teacher, till the arrival of Dr. Morrison at Canton. His studies were now better directed, his progress more rapid, and his knowledge more accurate. He kept his native teacher by him all the day, and applied to him on all occasions; nor was it long before he was required to use his small stock of Chinese.

The translation of the Chinese New Testament, which was now completed by his colleague, together with some thousand copies of a tract, were put into Dr. Milne's hands for circulation. Having no home at Macao, nor permanent residence at Canton, after only six month's study of the language, he departed to visit Java, and the Chinese settlements in the Archipelago, and

there to distribute the books. After visiting the towns and villages of Java, and some other islands, where Chinese resided; distributing the books from house to house, and putting them into other channels also for circulation, he returned at the end of eight months to China. The winter of 1814, as well as the preceding, he spent in Canton, studying the language, with the same ardor as at first. He opened his rooms also for public worship on the Sabbath to the foreign residents, and seamen who chose to attend.

According to views which had long been cherished by Dr. Morrison, a station was needed for the mission, as a centre of communication and action, and where christian books might be safely published. Dr. Milne was selected to locate, at Malacca, the hitherto unsettled mission. "Aware, said he, that the progress of institutions is slow, when there is neither wealth or influence at command, we resolved to begin on a small scale, but constantly to keep our eye upon, and direct our efforts towards, great ends." In the spring of 1815, Dr. Milne, and his wife entered their new scene of labors, and were kindly received by the Resident, Maj. Farquhar, who was ever their friend. The Dutch christians, who were entirely destitute of preaching, applied to him for assistance. He accordingly began and continued, till his death, to preach before them once on each Sabbath: for which services they gave him a small salary during life, and afterwards a pension to his children from the Orphan Fund.

One of his first efforts was directed to the establishment of a Chinese free school. The Chinese had never heard of such a thing, and could not, for a twelve months, believe, that their children were really to be taught, and books furnished them, *gratuitously*; they suspected that presents would yet be demanded; or that some selfish and sinister purpose would yet "leak out." They could not comprehend the idea of doing and spending so much, simply to do good to others. Thus many kept back their children for the first year. The school opened with only five scholars. By the most cautious process he also succeeded in introducing the use of Christian books, and prevailed on both the teachers and scholars to attend christian worship. In 1820, Dr. Milne says, "connected with the missions are 13 schools, in all containing about three hundred children and youth." Some friends in the army and in Bengal aided him in this work, by liberal donations. His remarks on this occasion seem to be worthy of remembrance. "Missionaries, to whose lot wealth rarely falls, feel greatly encouraged by such assistance. Wealthy Europeans, or persons in comfortable circumstances in India, may do much good by their liberality. It may feed the poor, clothe the naked, and teach multitudes of ignorant heathen children, to peruse the records of eternal life."

Another work in which he immediately engaged, was the publication of a periodical, called the "Chinese Monthly Magazine." This was continued, with very little assistance, till his death. Thousands of copies were yearly circulated among the Chinese of the Eastern Archipelago, in Siam, Cochin-China, and also in the Chinese empire. Two years later, he began an English Quarterly periodical, entitled the "Indo-Chinese Gleaner." This was a much more laborious work than the former, but he also received much more assistance, about one half being furnished by his senior colleague. This was also continued till Dr. Milne died, and expired with him. His opinion of the value of such periodicals, is certainly that of one who had experience: he says; "in the intellectual wastes which missionaries usually inhabit, thought becomes torpid, mental energy languishes, and the ordinary range of vision becomes narrow. If a publication combines religion and philosophy, literature and history, there is something to inform the understanding, to rouse the dormant feelings; something to awaken caution, to encourage languishing hope, something to excite benevolent sympathies, something to draw out fervent prayer to God, cordial thanks for his blessings, active zeal in his cause, and ardent love to all his children."

The last three or four years of his life, were much devoted to the "Anglo-Chinese College." The corner-stone was laid, Nov. 11th, 1818. In 1820, it was so far advanced that a class was formed, and instruction given. This College originated, as is generally known, with a donation of £1000 from his predecessor; but the charge of erecting buildings, and the details of its organization, devolved on Dr. Milne. From that time till his death, he was the Principal of the institution, managing its general affairs, and giving instruction twice or thrice daily in the Chinese language. In 1817, he welcomed the arrival of a fellow-laborer, the Rev. Mr. Medhurst. The next year, three or four more arrived, most of whom have since ceased from their earthly labors. After studying the language for a time at Malacca, they separated, as new stations were successively formed at Penang, Singapore, and Batavia.

In the midst of these labors, Dr. Milne was called to mourn the loss of his dearest earthly friend. Sickness had often visited them. Death had already taken two dear children from the afflicted parents; but the mother was yet spared. In March 1819, she was called to her rest, dying in peace, and in the full hope of a blessed eternity. Most deeply and tenderly did the surviving husband feel the loss. "The desire of his eyes was taken from him." Often, from this time even till his death, the pages of his private journal are wet with the tears of the husband, while they show also the consolations of the christian. "O Rachel! Rachel! endeared to me by every possible tie! But I will try not to grieve for thee, as thou didst often request before thy departure, I will try to

cherish the remembrance of thy virtues and sayings, and teach them to the dear babes thou hast left behind. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, and blessed be the name of the Lord."

From this time, the care of his four surviving children was heavy on his mind; but he slackened not his hand in the work of the Lord, rather quickening his steps as he came nearer the goal. For more than two years all the concerns of the mission had devolved entirely on himself. It was his to visit, and petition government; to plan and superintend the mission buildings; to oversee the schools; to prepare the Magazine; to edit the Gleaner; to teach in the college; to carry on translations; and daily to pursue the study of the Chinese, the Malay, the Siamese, and the Cochinchinese languages. From some of these labors he was relieved by his younger brethren. He found time also, to "preach the word." From the first year of the mission he preached in a pagan temple, weekly, to the Chinese on thursday evenings; on the Sabbath, besides preaching to the Dutch, he had, while his health admitted, two services in Chinese. "The difficulty of collecting a congregation, he says, was all along felt. The Chinese spend the day in hard labor, and their evenings are very commonly devoted to gambling. When a few persons came to hear, it was no easy thing to fix their attention. Some would be talking, some laughing at the novelty of the doctrines preached, and some smoking their pipes. But the few who attended regularly, soon became very decorous and attentive."

The reception of his preaching among the heathen, as described to him by one of the converts, is very characteristic of Chinese sentiments. "Some treat the gospel with the highest contempt; others say, what is the use of spending so much money in making books, &c., for our instruction! Where people are out of employ, were he to give five dollars, or where persons are commencing a pepper plantation, a few dollars to assist them; that would he spending money more to the purpose. If he will give us money, we will be his followers. He is a very good man, that we all know; but though he has been here more than two years, what good has he done us? Who has received his doctrines? Yet he has even deprived us of cock-fighting! What use of calling us to embrace his religion and to worship his God? May we not just as well call him to embrace ours, and worship our gods?" Another person who was in his employ says, "it is all very well, I now receive his pay, I ought to serve him, I will agree with him; if he even bid me go out and read to the people in town when he is absent, I will do it."

Yet these labors had the effect gradually to enlighten the minds of many, to reform their conduct, and to weaken their attachment to idolatry. The present native teacher Afa is the

first convert whom he baptized. This convert outlives his instructor, of whose life and habits he loves to speak; he adheres to his profession still at the end of sixteen years, though tried by the loss of his property, by scourging, and imprisonment. He is now an ordained "Evangelist" of the London Missionary Society.

But the work to which he devoted most of the study and labor of his last seven years, and that which will cause the name of Milne to be longest remembered, was the translation and composition of books. By his early diligence in the study of Chinese, he acquired great facility in writing on moral and religious subjects in that language. "No tracts, says his surviving colleague, are so acceptable to the Chinese, as some of poor Milne's." He used his pen for all occasions, and literally spent his life in writing. In the translation of the Old Testament, he ardently desired to participate, and chose the following, historical books, supposing them easiest to translate,—Deuteronomy, Joshua, and Judges, the two books of Samuel, of Kings, and of Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, and Job; in all thirteen. The rest were translated by Dr. Morrison. He wrote also in Chinese not less than fifteen tracts, varying from ten to seventy leaves, besides a full commentary on Ephesians, and an elaborate work in two volumes entitled an "Essay on the soul." His own view of these multiplied works, is found in his private journal.

"They appear many for my strength, especially if to these the care of my own family be added. I humbly hope also that they are, and will be useful to the church of God. But when I view them as connected with the imperfection of my motives, and the dullness, and deficiency of spiritual affections in them, I am disposed to adopt the language of the Prophet; "very many, and very dry." They appear to be almost "*dead works*." Woe's me! Woe's me! my dead soul! Lord make it alive to thee, and this will give life to all my labors."

In 1822, the life of this laborious servant of Jesus terminated. After many premonitions of danger, and partial recovery, the continued and large expectorations of blood, shewed the fatal progress of disease. Though it was rightly apprehended that the liver was the seat of complaint, no remedies could longer check its gradual, and certain progress. After a voyage to Penang for health, he returned emaciated and weak, to die at his post. There he had planted the standard of his master, there he defended it, and there he fell. Approach and behold the scene. He has not now to relinquish his treasures, for they are laid up in heaven, for him. He has no late and desperate work of repentance yet to perform. He has no secret or open enemies to forgive, for he cherished no ill-will to any. He has not now to seek that Friend to stand by him, who never forsakes; in his youth, he sought him, and found him, and committed to him the keeping of his soul

against that day. He is not leaving his home, and his friends, for a friendless exile; but he is going to his Father's house, to see that wondrous Saviour, who loved him and gave himself for him. Yet the closing scene of this good man's life was peace, not joy. It is a serious thing to die. It is a serious thing to stand before the *perfect* judgment.

On the 2nd of June, 1822, Dr. Milne died at the age of thirty seven years, about ten years after his arrival in China.

Thus have we traced, very imperfectly, the course of this servant of God, from Europe to Asia, from the condition of a shepherd boy, among the hills of Scotland, to that of the devoted missionary, dying amidst his labors at Malacca. Many of his early companions, doubtless, died in their vices as they lived, and in their own native village; he lived the life of the righteous, and his books are now read by thousands in Asia. Truly, might he say, "God had better things in reserve for me."

His success as a missionary resulted very much from his humble piety, and his entire devotion to his work. He used to say, "when I am convinced a thing is *right*, I could go through the fire to accomplish it." He was fully convinced the cause of missions was the cause of heaven; and neither fire nor water could impede his onward course. One great object constantly filled his mind and fired his soul, the establishment of Christ's kingdom among the nations. This called forth his earnest prayers in his youth, and engrossed all his labors in later life. At all times, and places, and on all occasions, the missionary work was the first with him. "This one thing he did." In the beginning of his course he made it a rule to devote fourteen hours of the day to study and devotion, six hours to sleep, and the rest, to meals and recreation, walking twice a day for health. But in the later years of his life, finding it impossible to sleep so much, he used to sit up till two o'clock in the morning. There is no doubt, that his health suffered from intense study, and much writing. But his naturally impetuous determined mind, though softened by the grace of God, bore him along with an impetus not easy to withstand. Hence in his private journal, we meet with such reflections as these. "Attempting too much labor for my strength, seems to be my fault." Considering his want of an early education, the results of his ten years missionary life, are indeed astonishing.

His readiness to seize on every circumstance which could bear on the cause, was also the effect of the concentration of his powers on this *one* work. An extract from one of his private prayers well expresses his desire; "Give me wisdom and energy to know and seize on all the facilities furnished by thy Providence, for promoting truth and righteousness. May I be humble in myself, and greatly value the talents of others. O bless my family, my partner in life, bless our little ones

with the beginnings of eternal life.* Fit me for a useful life and a happy death. My eyes are this evening lifted up towards thy mercy in Christ. It is my only hope, my sole plea. Look upon me, pardon me, bless me and mine, in time, and through eternity, for Christ's sake. I give myself afresh to thee, my Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier; seal me, and save me. Amen, and Amen."

If the character of a man is noble in proportion to the good which he designs and executes, then the life of Milne may be compared with others of greater name. Many foreigners have resided for ten or twenty years, on these remote shores of Asia; have amassed their thousands among these heathen, and then returned to enjoy, in their own land, the fruit of their labors. They had money and influence while living here, enough to diffuse widely around them the blessings of education and christianity. But they gathered up their thousands, and hasted quickly away. Ignorance remained unenlightened as before, and misery unalleviated. Yea, they hasted by like the wind, they passed away and were forgotten. Among them came also one, who, beholding the miseries of heathenism, passed not by on the other side. He instructed the youth in schools, he enlightened the aged by books, he opened his hand to give the words of eternal life to all. He amassed not silver and gold, but Bibles; and soon he also returned to enjoy the fruit of his labors; returned, not to his native land whence he came out; but, we doubt not, to the city of the living God; where, with the "noble army of martyrs," he now reaps the gracious reward of a life devoted to the Saviour of the world. His name passes not away forgotten from Asia; being dead he yet speaketh daily to thousands of reading pagans, and the day of regenerated China, we believe, is brought nearer by the labors of William Milne.

* While preparing this sketch, a fact has come to our knowledge, which we are unwilling to suppress. In the "Memoirs of Milne," there is an extract from his "will," concerning the education of his children. He was particularly solicitous that they might be very early taught two things, (1) *to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness*, and (2) *to be diligent in business*; and adds, in another paragraph,—*"It would be a most grateful and delightful anticipation for me to cherish, that they, or some of them, should devote themselves to the service of Christ as Chinese missionaries."*

The desires of the good man's heart seem likely to be granted. His eldest child, Amelia, who was born in China, is, we understand, expected soon to accompany a lady of great respectability to Malacca, for the purpose of giving to Pagan and Mohammedan girls a christian education. She comes to the endeared spot where her beloved parents labored and died; and where their remains are deposited till the morning of the resurrection. They died at their post, and their children are about to enter into their labors.

Their three sons have resided chiefly at Aberdeen; but are now, by latest accounts, studying in Edinburgh. One of them, who was named after his father, and who is said to possess much of his father's decision of character, has, recently, enrolled himself among the professed disciples of Christ.

MISCELLANIES.

NATIONAL CHARACTER OF THE CHINESE.*—The character of nations, like that of individuals, often changes. This remark applies to China as well as to other countries, though perhaps not to the same extent. The Chinese national character is not now what it was in the commencement of the present dynasty; nor was it then what it had been in the days of Confucius. From the time of Yaou and Shun, down to the time of that philosopher, it had also undergone those changes which commonly attend a state of progressive civilization. In the reign of these excellent Chieftains, China was yet a small country, and but just emerging from barbarism. A little before their days, the people lived in the savage state. They resided in woods, in caves; and in holes dug in the ground. They covered themselves with the skins of beasts; they also made garments of leaves of trees, of reeds, and of grass. They ate the flesh of animals, with the blood, and the skin, and the hair; all unboiled, unroasted, and undressed. They could neither read, nor write, nor cypher.

Their dead often lay unburied. Sometimes they were thrown into ditches, and sometimes cast without shroud, coffin, or ceremony, into a hole dug with the end of a stick in the ground, where wolves, insects, and other creatures devoured them. They were in a state equally barbarous and savage with that in which the Britons lived during the reign of Druidism, before the conquest by Julius Cæsar.

From the time of Yaou and Shun, the Chinese territory extended, its population increased, and its character improved. While it remained in the feudal state, neither arts nor sciences flourished. Necessity was the mother of invention in China as well as in other nations. Increasing numbers taught them the necessity of labor; labor, of instruments; and instruments, of skill; this produced some improvement in the practical arts, the progress of which was secured for a time by the impulse of the principle which gave them birth.

In literature, nature itself became their instructor. By the impression of the feet of birds on the sand, and the marks

* From the writings of Milne; see *Memoirs of the Rev. William Milne*, D. D. by Dr. Morrison; Malacca: 1824; also the "Retrospect" by Milne.

on the bodies of shell-fish, they caught the first idea of writing. Their written character continued for a considerable time purely hieroglyphic; but after passing through various changes, suggested partly by convenience, and partly by genius, it gradually lost its original form, and approximated to one better adapted to the purposes of government and of literature.

In the earlier ages of China, before its inhabitants were collected into towns, and cities, and large associations, along with their rusticity of ideas, manners, and virtues, they also preserved the ruder vices of uncivilized life; but were not yet contaminated with the intrigue, the falsehood, and the hypocrisy, which too often attend a more advanced stage of society. Hence many of their sages of subsequent times, affected with the evils which passed under their more immediate review, and forgetting those which existed of old, pass the highest encomiums on the ages of antiquity. Even things which were really the consequences of ignorance and barbarity, they sometimes mistake for virtues of high character. They erroneously conceived, that the vices of their own times were rather the necessary consequences of high civilization, than the native corruption of the human heart, displaying itself in another form. In the days of Confucius, and for some time after, China continued divided into a great many small kingdoms, which all united in acknowledging the supremacy of the emperors, while each possessed within itself all the arbitrary power of a feudal state.

In the dynasty Tsin, the power of the states was abolished, the whole amalgamated into one, and the government erected into that gigantic despotism, the great lines of which it preserves to this hour.

The wisdom of the ancient rulers and sages of China formed a code of laws which, with many defects, possessed also many great excellencies. Through the numerous ages in which these laws have existed, they have been executed with various degrees of moderation and humanity; and sometimes without the oppressive exertion of arbitrary power. The huge machine of their government has been often battered, both from without and from within, and still its essential parts hang together.

For ages, the arts and sciences in China have been stationary; and from the accounts of the last English embassy, seem, at present, rather in a retrograde state. The obstinate refusal of the Chinese to improve, is rather to be viewed as the effect of principle, than the want of genius. They consider the ancient sages, kings, and governments, as the prototypes of excellence; and a near approximation to the times in which they lived, the highest display of national wisdom and virtue. They are still the blind slaves of antiquity, and possess not that greatness of character which sees its own defects, and sighs after improvement.

Tartars now govern China. The milder sons of Han* could not withstand the arms of the conquering Khan. The wild Scythian, who ate the flesh of horses, and drank the milk of cows, was fit for every enterprise. His restless ambition, nothing but universal empire could satiate; and scarce any obstacle could resist his savage prowess. At length, after the reverses attendant on a state of warfare continued with various interruptions for several centuries, he seated himself securely on the throne of China, where he now holds the most prominent place among earthly princes; and assumes to be "the head of all—the son of heaven—the emperor of all that is under the starry firmament—and the vice-gerent of the most high."

It is now about one hundred and eighty years since the Tartars obtained the government of the whole Chinese dominions. They united China to their own territory, and thus formed one of the most extensive empires that ever existed. They adopted many of the customs of their newly acquired subjects; but they did not give up those which formed their own national peculiarities. They continued to preserve the essential parts of that code of laws which they found existing in China; while they, at the same time, imposed certain regulations which were viewed by the conquered either as highly disgraceful or oppressive; and the non-compliance with which, cost some of them their lives. The executive government was soon filled by Tartars; who at times affected, and still affect, to treat the Chinese with contempt. To contend is of no avail: the Chinese must submit, and (as they sometimes express themselves) "quietly eat down the insults they meet with."

Since the union of China to Mantchou Tartary, there has been two national characters in the empire, reciprocally affecting each other. The high and exclusive tone which had ever been assumed by the emperors of China, was highly gratifying to the mind of the victorious Tartar, while the power of his arms secured the honor of superiority to himself. The qualities of the Scythian character have been softened down by the more mild and polished ones of the Chinese; and the cowardly imbecility of the Chinese has been in part removed by the war-like spirit of the Scythian. The intrigue and deceit of the Chinese, and the rude courage of the Tartar, seem to unite in what may be considered the present national character of China; and so far as that union does exist, it will render her formidable to their enemies. What cannot be effected by force, may be by fraud, and vice versa; and what any one of these qualities singly may not be able to accomplish, the union of both may. But this mixture of qualities is

* Han is a term often used by the Chinese themselves in order to distinguish them from the Tartars. They call themselves Han-tsze, i. e. "Sons of Han."

heterogeneous and unnatural; and there is reason to suppose that the seeds of national evil are in it, like those liquid compounds, e. g. water and oil, the parts of which are made to adhere for a time by mechanical agitation, but when allowed to settle, resolve themselves without any external cause to their simples; so perhaps it may be with China.

The tempers of her own legitimate children and those of the strangers who rule over her, are discordant, and refuse to coalesce; and if they do not by their own operation work her complete ruin, they may either make the country an easier prey to its foes, or prevent the emperors from sitting easy for any length of time on their thrones.

In point of territory, riches, and population, China is the greatest of the nations; and has, perhaps, to a degree beyond any other, the art of turning all her intercourse with foreign countries to her own advantage. But here she shows but little honorable principle. Idle displays of majesty and authority must satisfy those nations that seek her alliance; for in vain will they look for truth and respectful treatment from her. If they be contented to knock under, and acknowledge that their bread—their water—their vegetables—and their breath, are the effects of her bounty; then she will not deal unkindly with them—she will not oppress them—she will even help them. Proud of an imaginary benevolence, which is high as the heavens, and broad as the ocean, she will throw the boon to them; but withal is sure to remind them, with the tone of authority, to cherish feelings of respect and submission towards those by whose beneficence they subsist. But woe to that nation that dares presume, even in the secret corners of its heart, to consider itself equal—or within a thousand degrees of equality—that country is rude, barbarous, obstinate, and unfilial; and not to tear it up root and branch, is considered a display of forbearance worthy of the celestial sovereign alone!

If, in the intercourse of China with foreign nations, she cannot with truth and justice make all things appear honorable to herself, she makes no difficulties about using other means. She discolors narrative—she misquotes statements—she drags forth to the light whatever appears for her own advantage—and seals up in oblivion whatever bears against her. She lies by system; and, right or wrong, must have all things to look well on the paper. This view of her political character is not less true than it is lamentable.

Let us turn to her *moral* character; and here we shall, as in other countries, see much that is good, with great preponderance of that which is evil. The morals of China, as a nation, commence in filial duty, and end in political government. The learned, reduce every good thing to one principle; viz. that of paternal and filial piety; every other is but a modification of this. In this they think they discover the seed of all virtues, and the motives to all duties. They apply it in

every case, and to every class of men. They trace its origin high up to those operations which at first separated the chaos, and see its importance illustrated in every operation of nature. Immediate parents are considered the father and mother of the family. The rulers of provinces, the father and mother of the province. The emperor and empress, the father and mother of the empire. Heaven and earth, the father and mother of the emperor, and of all this inferior world. *Yin* and *Yang*, the father and mother of the post-chaotic universe. The principle now under consideration, is supposed to teach the good emperor to treat the people with the tenderness of a father; and the people to obey the emperor with the veneration of children. Under its influence, the good parent stretches his views forward to thousands of future generations, and lays up good for his unborn posterity; and the good child turns his thoughts backward to thousands of past ages, and remunerates the favor of his deceased ancestors. China considers herself as much a parent when she punishes, as when she rewards; when she cuts off the heads of her obstinate children, as when she crowns the obedient with riches and honor; and the minister of state, but yesterday raised from the rank of a plebeian, is not more obliged to render thanks for the paternal grace that has elevated him, than the criminal just about to be cut in a thousand pieces, is to bow down and to return thanks for the paternal discipline which will, in an instant, exterminate his terrestrial being.

The laws of China operate very powerfully against the exercise of benevolence in cases where it is most needed. Whatever crimes are committed in a neighborhood, all the neighbors around are involved; and contrary to what is the case in most other civilized countries, the law considers them guilty, until they can prove themselves innocent. Hence the terror of being implicated in any evil that takes place, sometimes prevents the people from quenching fire, until the superior authorities be first informed—and from relieving the distressed, until it is often too late. Hence it not unfrequently happens, that a man who has had the ill fortune to be stabbed to death in the street near to his neighbor's door, or who having fallen down through fatigue or disease, dies, is often allowed to remain on the spot until the stench of the putrid corpse obliges them, for their own safety, to get it by some means or other buried out of the way. It is easy to see how powerfully this operates as a national check to benevolence.

SENSUS COMMUNIS.—In Europe, and wherever christianity is generally known, the *common sense* of all persons, however hostile to true religion, is against idolatry and polytheism. Monotheism is the universal creed, both of the vulgar and of the philosopher. The other belief appears ridiculous. But it was

not so when Moses, in the midst of polytheistic idolaters, and in a barbarous age, introduced monotheism,—the doctrine of one God, the creator, the constant preserver and governor, and the final judge of men. Nor was it the case in Greece, or Rome, when christianity began its course. Nor have the philosophers of India, or China, if they attained to the knowledge of one God, been able to diffuse it among the people. The *common sense* of China is against monotheism. The monotheist appears to many, ridiculous and impious.

We have before us an exemplification of this in a paper written by an educated man, who had spent some years at the Anglo-Chinese College. The subject of his paper is the diversity of sentiment and feeling among men, not only under different circumstances, but also under the same circumstances; and he illustrates his subject by a paragraph on his own experience, in the following personal narrative.

“This year during the summer, in the beginning of the 7th moon, returning to Canton from Singapore, in a European ship, we had a strong gale of wind for four or five days. The masts and sails were all carried away; and every body on board came upon deck; it being necessary to nail “oil cloth” over the hatches. From the 8th to the 10th no fire could be lighted on board. There was nothing but biscuit to eat; and in addition to these circumstances, the vessel leaked on both sides. Scores of men, by turns, kept pumping night and day. The captain looked extremely sad; and of the passengers, some were looking up to heaven, and uttering sighs and groans; some were calling aloud on heaven to save them; some were crying and shedding tears. I lifted up my heart to heaven and prayed in silence. I recollected my personal sins and wickedness, and that for ten years I had crossed the seas, and heard the holy religion of the divine heaven; but had not given my heart to its cordial reception; nor taken the things which I had heard, and taught them to others. I determined, if God would forgive my sins, and save me from this calamity, and bring me to my home to see my kindred and friends, that I would take every pains to instruct them, and point out their erroneous opinions of God, in which they daily indulged, and to open a way for the regeneration of their hearts, and lead them to the holy religion. I purposed, if my life was spared, to spend it hereafter in obedience to the commandments of God; holding fast his precepts, and not daring to defile myself with my former pollutions.

“At this time the maddened winds blew, and drove with vehement rapidity, the falling rain. From head to foot all were drenched through, and pierced with cold. I thought to myself that if God did save the ship, this body of mine must be sick. But if I did get home and meet once again my wife and children, should I then die, it would be better, than to have my dead body cast into the sea to be devoured by the

fish. When the Great Ladrone appeared in sight, all on board, high and low, beat their foreheads with their hands, and thanked heaven for their preservation.

After landing, all the people began to collect money to buy victims, incense, and candles to go to the idol temples to offer thanks. I asked them to what God they were going to give thanks; to the god of the sea or to the god of the winds? Or if they were going to give thanks to the Most High God, the Sovereign of heaven? All the people on hearing these words, made them the subject of jest and mockery. The next day, they applied to me for a subscription, and said, that if I did not subscribe I should be called mean and parsimonious. But (I thought) if I offered incense to an idol god, I was disobeying a precept of the Most High.

“At this juncture it happened that a subscription came round for poor shipwrecked sufferers; and to it I doubled my subscription, for their use, and to work together with the mercy of the Most High in their deliverance. On observing this, some said, I was an impious man, and did not respect the gods; others said, I had conferred a real and substantial benefit.” &c.

Thus it appears, that the rational monotheism of a half-converted Chinese, was the subject of derision, and of blame, to the common sense of his pagan countrymen.

INSECURITY OF PROPERTY in China, arises not from direct robbery on the part of government officers; but from alleging against the possessors of property, either truly or falsely, the violation of some law. We have known dollars paid to the amount of many thousands, in consequence of accusations entirely groundless. A case occurred about a month ago, to parties of whom we had some knowledge, in which truth and falsehood were mixed up together. A Chinese named *Lin*, or in English, *Forest*, was invited, upwards of twenty years since, to Bengal to teach the Chinese language. He left a wife and daughter in this country; but like many of the same class, he married another wife in Calcutta. In the course of years, he became wealthy, having saved about two lacks of dollars. The person he married seems to have been the daughter of some Chinese resident there; for, not long ago, he sent his second son, with his mother to China, to honor his deceased parents, and take care of his first wife. The youth was about 20 years of age, and brought with him 20,000 dollars in goods. Last winter young Forest was married. On that evening, when the bridegroom was expected, an uncle seized his person, and demanded a thousand dollars to let him go. This was done on the pretext that his father had made an unfair division of his grandfather's patrimony; and the said uncle from poverty had been unable to marry. To save appearances on such an occasion, Forest gave a bond for a thousand dollars, and was liberated.

Having built a small neat house, and every thing indicating prosperity, the circumstances of old Lin became the talk of all the neighborhood,—near which was a police office. At length, some north country sharpers got the story, and contrived a plot to extort money. As Forest was walking before his door one evening, the sharpers came up and asked if that was not the house of Lin. An affirmative was given, when they proceeded as principal and witnesses to urge a claim against Liu senior, for 3000 taels, which he had borrowed before he went abroad. They sanctioned their demand on Lin junior by the adage,—A son must pay his father's debts.

Young Forest retired, and sent out his father's old wife to talk to them. She puzzled them a little by asking particulars, as to time, place, &c.; and the sharpers went off with a threat to appeal to the mandarin. Instead of that however, the next day they prepared a sedan chair, and as Forest came out of his house, seized him and put him into the chair; and were in the act of carrying him off, when they were stopped by the police, who heard Forest inside abusing them and calling out *murder!* One of the sharpers declared that the youth was his son, who had run away from his studies, and got into bad company; which had compelled the father to adopt the present course. The police did not see much either of paternal affection or filial duty in the proceedings, and took them all into custody.

The old lady at length made her appearance before the mandarin, and told a plausible tale; that her husband had gone to sea, the ship was lost, and he could not return. Therefore he had remained abroad, and when dying directed this son to return. The sharpers could not tell so good a tale; and so Forest was dismissed, and the others thrown into prison, to be punished. Thus Forest has escaped this time; but he must fee his deliverers, who know the facts of his case; for the children in the neighboring streets call him *fantzszr*, a foreign lad.

BENEVOLENT ENTERPRISE.—When great enterprises are to be planned and carried forward, the difficulties that may attend their progress and completion, together with their probable results, near and remote, should always be carefully considered. If an extensive canal, or rail-road, is to be constructed, many calculations and surveys must first be made, and with great care. If the condition of man is to be meliorated—if his “combativeness,” superstition, ignorance, and immoralities are to be exchanged for peacefulness, intelligence, justice, kindness, and such like, it is necessary first to become acquainted with his condition, and character. The correctness of these remarks none will deny; they are the dictates of common sense, and involve the principles on which we daily act, and which are

recognised in that divine declaration, that "the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light."

That a wide field for commercial enterprise has long been opened in the east, is sufficiently attested by the millions of treasure and of merchandise, which have, during the last two or three centuries, floated around the Capes. Still, a more correct and extensive acquaintance with these countries, and with their productions and inhabitants, would greatly increase the advantages of commerce. But if in this point of view there is any thing to attract our attention—and there is not a little which *does* attract it,—how much more do we find which ought to interest us, when as moral and religious men we survey the same field? The West has been enriched by the productions of the East; silks, and spices, and other valuable commodities, in immense quantities, have been wafted from the shores of the Pacific and the Indian oceans, to the numerous harbors on both sides of the Atlantic. And what has been given in exchange? Generally an equivalent, we doubt not, in commodity; and sometimes with it also, we fear, have been scattered the seeds of death. In some instances, however, a good influence has been exerted; salutary measures have been adopted; changes for the better have taken place; and a little light breaks in upon the dark prospect. We refer not merely to the cases where the "bread of life" has been given to the hungry poor; but to all those, where efforts have been made for the improvement of general knowledge,—in the sciences, the arts, or the ordinary circumstances of life.

In the healing art, for instance, we have more than one example, immediately at hand. To pour light on dark eye-balls; and, by the simplest process imaginable, to raise an impregnable barrier against what had long been regarded as one of death's surest messengers, may not in themselves be deemed worthy of any special notice.* We might make the same remark concerning the work of translating and circulating the oracles of God,—of shedding heavenly light on benighted minds, and of proffering the balm of consolation to wounded spirits.

* We have for a long time been desirous of obtaining for the pages of the Repository, an account of the introduction, progress, and present state of *Vaccination* in this country. The Gentleman who has the honor of introducing this practice among the Chinese, will very obligingly furnish us with all the principal facts of the case. But as his papers had been sent on board the ship in which he sails for England, before we made the request, he will forward the documents to us from Java. Few, if any individuals, who have ever left this country, are more worthy to be remembered by the Chinese, than Dr. Alexander Pearson. He carries with him the high esteem and regard of all who knew him, and may justly cherish the recollection of having benefitted thousands who can never enjoy his acquaintance.

It is now, we believe, four or five years since the infirmary, for the benefit of *blind* Chinese, was established at Macao. We hope it may be in our power, ere long, to give some particulars concerning that establishment.

Yet who does not see, that, in the one case as well as in the other, such acts will be followed by the most happy results, the influence of which will not be confined to a few, but extended to many individuals, and be perpetuated to future generations. "Millions of money," according to the views of a late biographer, are "quite sufficient to constitute the sublime." But, he adds, money in itself is nothing. So we may say of action. And as money hoarded up is useless, and the *love* of it the *root of all evil*; so action which reaches not beyond one's self, is poor and criminal. But without action the riches of Cræsus, or the mines of Potosi would be profitless; still it is the circumstances of action—its motive and direction,—which give it value, or make it positively bad; when inspired and directed by good will, it then rises to a high order, partakes of the nature of godliness, and yields *great gain*. On this principle, "two mites" may out-value "abundance" of treasure; and in the "*moral sublime*" equal millions of money! Little, very little does that man know of happiness, who has never tasted the luxury of doing good. Such action is like the quality of mercy,—

it is twice blessed;
It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes.

These eastern nations present a wide field for benevolent and philanthropic enterprise. The commercial, political, and social relations are to be viewed in a new and clearer light, and changed for the better. In many of the useful arts, and in the sciences—especially those of education and morals,—great improvements are to be made. Education is to be better understood, and more generally enjoyed; and the monstrous systems (if systems they may be called) of morals and religion are to be exchanged for the pure and perfect one, inculcated by him who spake as never man spake—whose yoke is easy and whose burden is light. In hastening improvements like these, who would not delight to participate?

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

VAN DIEMEN'S LAND.—A letter is before us, dated Hobart Town July 2nd, 1832, from which we learn a few interesting particulars. A new chapel, of moderate dimensions, has recently been erected at Ho-

bart Town; and a church has been organized; and a spirit of religious inquiry, which seeks for an abundant increase of the means of grace, and of the fruits of the spirit, is beginning to be manifest. And while multitudes

are prospering in their worldly circumstances, a *few* are becoming prosperous in spiritual things; of these few, some are members of the Church of England, others are Presbyterians, others are Wesleyan Methodists, and others are Independents.

Our correspondent makes worthy mention of those who preach the gospel at Hobart Town; and adds, "We do not, however, at present, see those glorious effects, resulting from the labors of ministers of the gospel in these places, which have been experienced in other lands, and which we are anxiously desirous to witness here. It is my earnest prayer, that the Lord would revive his work in the midst of the years, and cause his word to have free course and be glorified."

In a waste so dreary as Van Diemen's Land, it is peculiarly pleasing to meet with such an excellent spirit as that which is breathed forth in the letter before us. Let such a spirit become universal, then the solitary place shall be glad, and "the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose."

SIAM.—From the Singapore Chronicle, for the 18th of October last, we learn that the Siamese have committed new outrages on the Malay inhabitants, on the east coast of the Malayan peninsula, at Patani, and other places. The chief object of the Siamese seems to have been to obtain *money and slaves*.

On the 15th of August, a fire is said to have broken out in the "Malay district" of Bangkok, by which, about one hundred of their houses were

destroyed. It is said also, that the small pox had prevailed to a great extent in that city, and carried off many children.

In the notices of Siam, which have been given to the public from the pens of Messrs. Gutzlaff and Tomlin, there are several references to Burmah, and some account of the natives of that country, who reside at Bangkok. Christian books, in the Burman language, long since found their way to Siam; and at length, a member of the Burman mission, the Rev. J. Taylor Jones, has been commissioned to repair to Bangkok; and on the 16th of Oct. was at Penang on his way thither. Mr. J. expects to meet Mr. Abeel at Bangkok, and anticipates the early arrival of other laborers. A countryman of Mr. Gutzlaff's is expected to arrive at Bangkok, in the course of a few months, with a view to aid in the work which has been commenced by his friend and christian brother. But what are these, two, three, five, or ten—more or less,—among the thousands of Siam! With emphasis we may quote the words of our Lord:—*The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest.*

There are resources enough in christendom, if they were put in requisition, to supply the whole Pagan world *immediately* with the means of christian instruction. The work is vast, and it will be accomplished; though it may be hastened, or retarded, or stopped, for years, according as christians show themselves faithful, or the reverse.

LITERARY NOTICES.

THE *Christian Advocate's* publications for 1829, 1830, and 1831. By HUGH JAMES ROSE, B. D. *Christian Advocate in the University of Cambridge.* London: Rivington.

THE first of these Essays is entitled, "Christianity always progressive;" the second, "Brief remarks on the dispositions towards christianity, generated by prevailing opinions and pursuits;" and the third, "Notices of the Mosaic Law; with some account of the opinions of recent French writers concerning it." The whole are written in a clear, dispassionate, and argumentative style, for which Mr. Rose appears distinguished. As there are allusions to China in them, we have thought it right to call the attention of our readers to these works.

The first Essay is intended to answer "the objection made to christianity, on account of its want of universality." "It is unquestionably an old one," as Mr. Rose remarks, and has been often answered; still it is one that often rises anew in the human mind, and has peculiar weight situated as we are, where christians, even in name merely, are to the rest of the population as a drop in the ocean. Some persons profess-

ing christianity whom we have known, partly in consequence of the difficulty alluded to, have said, in direct opposition however to the declarations of Sacred Scripture, that it was not intended to be universal; or if it were so, it must be left to the Almighty to work a miracle to make it so. And on this view of the case they would neither use means themselves, nor encourage the efforts of others, to diffuse christian knowledge in Pagan or Mohammedan nations. Those who may have indulged such opinions, will find in Mr. Rose's Essay, strong arguments tending to shew that they are wrong in opinion, and blamable in conduct.

Mr. Rose arranges his observations under two principal heads. The first, to shew what it is reasonable to expect from christianity; and in the second place, to inquire whether those reasonable expectations have been fulfilled. He considers that unreasonable expectations have perplexed the believer, and given a fancied triumph to the infidel. His argument (so far as we have gathered it from a hasty perusal), rests on this foundation:—The ever-blessed God has granted to mankind a revelation of his Will, in a manner similar to the grant of the

reasoning faculty, and various physical benefits, for man's improvement and welfare, now or forever, as the case may be; still leaving man a free agent, to use or to abuse these gifts. Hence the progress of divine revelation throughout the world has been impeded by the remissness of its friends, and the hostility of its foes;—both, by the way, still accountable to God for their conduct.

That the Almighty Ruler of the human heart, says Mr. Rose, might arm any truths which he is pleased to reveal, with such powers of winning or enforcing their acceptance, as would be irresistible, is unquestionably certain; but it must be remembered, that such powers would therefore at once close or prevent the argument. And we add, reduce man to a machine, and destroy his responsibility.

That christianity is but partially diffused throughout the world after eighteen centuries is the fact; the inference from which, according to Mr. Rose, is not that christianity is not true; but that its friends have been most supine, and its foes most virulent; that man is in fact, far gone from righteousness; that the human heart is deceitful and desperately wicked. We concur with him in this inference, and we join heartily in his closing admonitions to christians generally, whether in their individual or social capacity, to use means to propagate the gospel.

He has some thoughts that apply only to his own government (the English), in reference to Hindostan. But there are in

his book some remarks which apply to all christian governments: "Shall the day never come, (he exclaims,) when governments, and nations will feel their highest interest, will confess their highest duty; and hasten to give, at least, the weight of their influence, and the impulse of their resources to the cause of God and man?" In several parts of his *Essays* we think he is too national and sectarian for the spirit of that holy religion, which has broken down the partition wall between Jew and Gentile, and admitted to the covenanted mercy of God, through Christ Jesus, all nations and kindreds and tongues and people.—As he says concerning Mr. Ward's book on India, so we must say of his, "It is very valuable, though tainted with petty sectarian feelings."

In his second *Essay*, Mr. Rose adverts to the argument given above, "That, as it has pleased God to use human agency in the propagation and confirmation of christianity, it is credible, that its progress may be retarded, and its final triumph delayed, by the errors and sins of the agents, and the evils which are consequent upon them."

It is his opinion that in christendom a disbelief of christianity, commonly called infidelity, is most prevalent in a "superficial age." He does not think that "the writers against revelation who appeared at the end of the seventeenth, and beginning of the eighteenth century, in England, (though perhaps superior to their continental brethren,) were entitled to consideration for any great

ability, any depth of research, any extent of learning." He gives his reasons for this opinion, in a brief review of the objections of Toland, Chubb, Collins, Shaftesbury, Tindal and Morgan. There is only one topic in this Essay which is applicable to China, and that is the "rage for *utility*"—the neglect of every thing that is not *useful* to the acquisition of money.

The Chinese always justify ignorance of foreign languages, and the affairs of mankind generally, by affirming that such knowledge is useless to them. As Mr. Rose complains, the useful *for what*, is not commonly avowed by the pseudo-philosophers of the daily press. *Usefulness* and *money-value*, are equivalent terms with them. Whatever is *profitable*—i. e. which will bring most money, is *most useful*. "Every thing is viewed through the medium of the market; and no ingenuity could devise a principle better calculated to debase and degrade mankind, and to destroy all the qualities by which God has sought to raise them above the level of the beasts that perish. If the political economists of the *present* day, had no other sin against the public good to answer for, but the establishment of the sovereignty of money, theirs would still be a fearful account to render. They have themselves chosen this base idol to worship, for it was not necessarily presented to them by the science which they profess to cultivate."

Mr. Rose's third Essay, written for last year, has more that

has a reference to China, than the two preceding; and we can cordially recommend it to the perusal of our readers. He says, that the certainty, that "truth will prevail at last" is one of the best comforts which the thoughtful heart can enjoy in this world. It is assuredly one great comfort amidst strife and violence, to know that eventually "it shall be well with the righteous;" and it is the belief of this fact, though yet future, that must bear up their spirits amidst many present evils.

Two writers have arisen in France, M. Benjamin Constant lately deceased; and M. Salvador. They are neither of them christians, yet take the part of christian writers against Messrs. Voltaire and Volney; against their flippancies and scurrilities. M. Constant takes so much of the Old Testament as pleases him for a Divine Revelation, and rejects the rest.

"*I recognise*," he says, "*the revelation made to Moses*, in that part of the Hebrew books where every virtue is recommended, filial love, conjugal love, hospitality to the stranger, chastity, friendship, which no other legislator raises into the rank of virtue, justice, and even pity, though the epoch of pity was not come, for that epoch is christianity; there is the voice divine, there is the manifestation of heaven on earth, and there only one cannot be deceived in doing every justice to it; because it responds to every sentiment, ennobles and purifies every affection, goes before the light of the age, and, in the midst of barbarism, sends into the the soul, truths

which reason would not have discovered till much later."

M. Constant further observes, that "without Moses it is probable that all the efforts of philosophy would have ended only in plunging mankind into pantheism, or hidden atheism, in which the religion and philosophy of India lost themselves together." "He recognises the revelation made to Moses, because he cannot in any other way explain the appearance of Theism in a barbarous age and people."

M. Constant is in this conclusion, we believe, perfectly right. And to India, he might have added China, as plunged by the religion of philosophy into pantheism or hidden atheism. We have endeavoured to find God, the eternal Jehovah, the Almighty, the blessed and self-existing God, the Creator of the universe,—but we have sought in vain among all the philosophy and the religion which we have met with in China.

Voltaire said that "the constitution of China is the best in the world, the only one founded on the rights of fathers, the only one where a governor is punished if he does not receive the applause of the people when he quits his charge, the only one which has instituted rewards for virtue.... The learned mandarins are considered as the fathers of the towns and provinces, and the king, the father of the empire." &c. M. Constant comments with a just severity on this passage, and reproaches Voltaire with having had another aim than the truth in this representation.

M. Constant's opinion concerning the Chinese, we are sorry to say, has a great deal of truth in it: they are, he observes, of all people the most attached to materialism, they have no notion of spirituality, they are blind fatalists; their doctrine is far more dry than any other pantheistic scheme:—"it supposes the existence of one only substance without attributes, without qualities, without will, without intelligence;" (we suppose he means the Le of Confucianists—see Morrison's Dictionary 6942,) "it knows of no motives but blind fatalism, and of no perfection but a blind apathy, without virtue and without vice, without pain and without pleasure, without hope and without fear, without desire and without dislike, and finally *without immortality*." (Here there is a good deal of Taouism set forth.)

But this is far from all; and he goes on to state, that we find "Religion reduced to frivolous and fastidious ceremonies, which only recal despised and forgotten opinions, etiquette in the place of feeling, a lifeless form for belief, signs without signification, a practice without a theory, irreligious abstractions for the high, and stupid superstitions for the people, the worship of one's ancestors, and yet no belief in a future life; the worship of spirits, and yet the most positive and gross materialism; for the rest, the most grinding oppressions, the most absolute power, barbarous punishments, corruptions without limits, craft in the service of fear, a complete absence of all generous

sentiments, an apathy which yields only to the love of gain, and a frightful fixedness even over the traits of the melancholy and degraded human form. This is what we see in China."

Such are the opinions of M. Constant *versus* M. Voltaire. The inferences Mr. Rose draws from these statements, are worthy of a Christian Advocate; and shew how meagre, poor and thin, philosophical theology appears by the side of the theology of Moses and of Christ.

TRAVELS IN CHALDEA:—by Capt. Robert Mignan, 1829.

WE notice this work at present, merely to remark on a paragraph (on page 318) concerning the arrow-headed characters of ancient Babylon. The Captain observes that, there is a singular coincidence in some of the *Persepolitan numerals in common with the Roman and Chinese*. "The letter $\angle$ formed of two arrow-heads joined together obliquely, represents the letter H; which letter being the fifth of the Sabeian, as well as of the Hebrew alphabet, represents the number five; and so in Persepolitan; change the position of it, and you have the Roman V, the numeral for five. Two of these placed together, form the letter X, the Roman numeral for ten; the same in Persepolitan and Chinese."

Now in this, and many similar cases, before endeavoring to account for the "singular coincidence," it is requisite in the first place to ascertain whether there is a coincidence. The Chinese character for *ten*, is, indeed, the figure of a cross; and the Chinese phrase for cross,

is, *shih tsze kea*, "*A ten character frame*," or stand; but it is never like a St. Andrew's cross, or the letter X. In all the ancient and modern Chinese books, that it has been our lot to examine, never did we meet with the character *ten*, written like an X; nor have any of our Chinese friends, though not ignorant of their ancient lore, ever met with such a *ten*; therefore we conclude that the "singular coincidence," so far as Chinese is concerned, does not coincide with the fact. The Chinese Dictionaries which analyze the formation of characters, make no allusion to the arrow in that for *ten*. The Shwo-wan says, "*ten is a perfect or complete number*. The horizontal line represents the east and west; the perpendicular one, north and south; thus all things contained within the four points of the compass are included by the character *ten*. One of the old Chinese characters for *ten* is a round black dot in the centre, and four lines radiating to the east, west, north, and south."

THE LIFE OF WICLIF; by Charles Webb le Bas, M. A. Professor in the East India College, &c. London: Rivington. 1832.

LE BAS, is a talented and pious minister of the Episcopal Church in England; and this work will, we believe, sustain his character. It is one of a series of theological and ecclesiastical works, being published after the modern fashion of useful, and family, and other libraries. Mr. Le Bas, in his

preface, acknowledges at considerable length his obligations to Mr. Vaughan, the most recent of Wiclif's biographers. Vaughan "prepared himself for his task by a more complete, and scrupulous examination of all the extant writings of Wiclif, than has, probably, ever been undertaken before." And Vaughan, with his publishers, liberally and kindly gave permission to Le Bas to print, from the previous work, the catalogue of Wiclif's writings" (the *one man* in his day). Mr. Vaughan, is we believe, a member of one of the Congregational churches in England. And the christian co-operation here alluded to, is just what it ought to be all the world over, among the disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Sacred History of the World,—philosophically considered; by Sharon Turner, F. S. A. &c.

This well-intentioned and, we think, well-executed work, is thrown into the form of letters to a son. Mr. Turner says truly—"Nature will never be properly understood, if its creation by the Deity be excluded from the thought....It is the great mistake of many eminent philosophers on the Continent, that they systematically exclude the Deity from all their reasonings on the formations and principles of things; and strive, in vain, to account for them rationally without Him." Christian deists and wicked men, to all practical purposes, are mere Budhists who make the Deity a "nihilism."

JOURNAL OF OCCURRENCES.

FORMOSA.—The news from this island, called by the Chinese, *Taiwan Foo*, has of late been of the most disagreeable character. For several days the information was whispered, rather than announced; but since the 15th inst., there has been no doubt in regard to the existence of an open, and, so far as the imperial government is concerned, rather a serious insurrection. From slight causes, managed by the police, and made the ground-work of oppression and extortion, the public mind was roused to exert the physical power it generally possesses, which resulted in the immediate murder—if we may so express it, of about seventeen hundred soldiers, and upwards of twenty officers, civ-

il and military, of his Majesty's service. According to some of the reports, *all* the imperial authorities, civil and military, are either killed, or scattered among the hills, or driven from the island. Large bodies of troops, have been ordered from Fuh-keen, and two or three thousand from Canton; but by the latest reports we have heard, the insurgents remained unchecked, and were committing new depredations.

HOO-PIH.—It is rumored here, that in the province of Hoo-pih, several towns are in the hands of insurgents.

LOCAL OFFICERS.—Governor Loo arrived here, from Lecnchow, on

the 15th instant. He received the seals of his office, as governor of the two provinces, Kwang-tung and Kwang-se, while at Leenchow.

Choo, the Foo-yuen, has delivered up his seals of office to the governor; and, on account of his ill health, has retired from official duties, for a period of three months, with his Majesty's permission.

Chung, the Hoppo, is to retain his office at the port of Canton, for another year.

Le, the late governor of Canton, has arrived safely at Peking; and it is said, will soon be put on trial for his ill conduct at Leenchow.

The fashionable Doctor in Canton is, at present, *Chin-she-tih*, a man upwards of 60 years of age. He rose in his profession from a state of poverty, a mere hawker of drugs. At present he is said to be possessed of a million of the currency of the land. Still he preserves his old simple habits. His house is situated near the Tartar general's—the Tseang-keun,—in the old city; early in the morning it is open for patients, who, as they come in, are conducted to a room adjoining the doctor's, where they wait for him in silence. Patients who wish him to call at their houses enter their names and places of abode with his door-keeper. About 9 o'clock he sallies forth, committing himself entirely to his faithful servant, and chair-bearers, who carry him round to the patients in the order of time, as reported at his gate. Those whose names are first entered are first served, without reference to their condition, whether poor or rich. He makes no charges. His patients may give nothing—or three cash, or three hundred, or three thousand, for a visit; just as they please. He receives no money with his own hand. People's *tangible thanks* are given to his servant.

Chin, whose name means "*Sink*," is a man of few words; and these few uttered in the dialect of Whampoa district, of which he is a native. He speaks the mandarin, as a broad Scotchman speaks English; turns a *rod* into a *road*, and makes other such like blunders. And further, he either cannot, or will not, satisfy glib people about the power of the drugs he administers;—which

by the way, it is said, are very few. He rings the changes upon some 20 or 24 medicines; being rather a cautious practitioner. He is the opposite of the *rhubarb doctor*, who long held the reigns of medical sovereignty in Canton; for Dr. Sink never administers rhubarb at all. Still, he has become popular among the rich natives, and in all the public offices. They say that, although he does not speak good mandarin, and is not able to explain the properties of his prescriptions, yet people very generally get well under his care; and therefore he has risen to his present influence and affluence.

(From notes of conversation with a Taou priest, Doctor Yellow. 1832.)

THE VILLAGE TYRANT.—We noticed this unhappy individual in a former number. His life is still spared; though it is said, sentence of death is recorded against him, to take place during the present season. This sentence, however, is generally commuted for transportation.

A ballad concerning him, which professes to be a moral warning to rich and influential men, contains some exhibitions of mind under trying and distressing circumstances, which we foreigners can find only in description. The feelings and language of two suicidal persons are narrated. Pride and revenge are predominant in their character. The Tyrant's dream is given at length. We intended to give a translation of it, but as a whole it is not translatable. His visions of the infernal regions are mixed up with indecent descriptions of crime and punishment.

The outline is this. In his dream he finds himself in the hands of an infernal police; who use him rather uncourtously. He is a little terrified and asks for leave to visit his home, before he is dragged to the king below. In the midst of their laughter and scorn he is permitted to go for a short time. In his dream he gets home; and being unexpected, finds his family occupied in gross licentiousness. His rage is worked up to the highest pitch, by the scenes he witnesses; but while in the act of taking revenge, he is hurried off by his guards to the regions below. Being arrived, he is subjected to

trial by the *Yen Wang*, or infernal king. He and his paramours are adjudged to various punishments, on the evidence of those he had corrupted, and robbed, and whose bones he had digged up.

This last act is considered the most heinous; and for it the Fooyuen is determined, if he can, to have his life. In his dream, the nuns who intrigued with him, are punished by having red-hot iron thrust into their bodies; the beautiful widow, who left her husband's old mother and eloped with him, is made to embrace a red-hot iron pillar; and with the other women is to be sent back to the world as female cats and dogs. The men who were his accomplices are to transigrate as privy flies, and scaly moles, &c. &c. He himself, if we remember rightly, is to be dashed upon a hill studded with spikes and knives.

All the proceedings in this *infernum* are conducted according to the manner of Chinese Courts. And the superstition goes so far as to induce the belief that money will be useful to the dead. There are persons who burn a great many gilt papers annually, under the mis-belief that all the money they cost will be laid up for them in the *Yin-koo*, or Treasury of Hades, for their use after death. Hence the rich put gems in the mouths of dead bodies before burial; and the poor, a cash or a piece of silver, that they may not be pennyless on the other side the grave.

We leave the reader to draw his own reflections from these ridiculous, but notwithstanding, melancholy statements. They are scarcely within the limits of decorum, but we do not imitate the delicacy of those who tell the public that they could unfold a very horrible and abominable

tale, while at the same time they leave the matter in utter darkness, and stimulate the imagination to guess whatever it pleases.

SLAVERY IN CHINA.—It is perhaps not generally known that the children of the slaves in China, are born slaves; and the children of free masters enjoy their rights over slaves throughout all generations. There have been cases in which the masters have become poor; and allowing their slaves to go and provide for themselves, they have become rich; but being again found by their masters, the latter have seized all the property. There are slaves of another class who are not bought outright, but with the condition that they may be redeemed. Good masters admit the claim when made agreeably to contract; but bad ones use every expedient to prevent the claim of redemption.

OBITUARY.—The twelfth brother of the salt merchant Le-loh-yay, the namesake, friend, and informer of governor Le, died at his brother's house on the 9th day of the 10th moon. All the neighbors rejoice at the event and say, "Another great gambler is dead, and Se-kwan district is freed from a great nuisance."

THUNDER occurring in unusual and unseasonable times is considered by the Chinese, ominous of some political change,—a revolt of statesmen, or death of the monarch, &c. If it thunder during the 10th moon, which this year began on the 22nd of Nov., it is thought particularly unlucky. People say it did thunder twice, on the 2nd of December; and that the late insurrection of the mountaineers of Leenchow is a proof of the theory.



Postscript.—The accounts from *Formosa*, continue to be unfavorable to his Majesty's government. The number of soldiers and officers killed, as stated on a preceding page, is probably much below the truth.

The unusually mild and warm *weather* which prevailed at the close of the last month, has been succeeded by several cold, cloudy, and rainy days. Ice was found this morning; the weather is fine and bracing, with strong wind from the north.

